HOW A STEAMSHIP LOOKS AFTER ONE YEAR UNDER W.

Harry Dwyer, Diver for the Government, Describes the Wreck of the Ill-Fated Ailsa.

Now They Are Blowing Up the Big Wreck with Bombs.

FOR fifteen months the Atlas line steamer Ailsa has lain in the mud of the lower bay with only her smokestacks and upper masts visible. The Chapman Wrecking Company, by whom I am employed, has begun operations with the intention of breaking her up.

The Ailsa was run down by the French line steamship Bourgogne on the afternoon of February 29, 1896, during a thick fog.

Passengers on the steamers plying up and down the bay, can easily see the striped smokestacks and pole masts protruding from the water.

Wreckers were employed some time ago to raise the vessel, but the scheme they had adopted failed, and they abandoned the job.

We anticipated rather an easy time when the Chapman Wrecking Company undertook to break up the big iron steamer lying on the bottom of the bay near Fort Hamilton. We have changed our minds.

There are thirty-six of these caissons hitched to the Ailsa by iron cables, and each caisson is thirty feet long by eight feet in diameter. You can imagine the difficulty of tearing away these fastenings.

The ship lies with her nose to the open sea. There is seven feet of mud against her sides on the shore side of the ship. On the channel side she is washed clear almost to her keelson.

She lies in forty-five or fifty feet of water. My mate, Ed Hickman, as good a diver as ever went under water, and myself go down twice a day and stay down for two hours and a half. While under water we fasten dynamite cartridges to various portions of the chains, and then come to the top until they are exploded. After we get these chains away we will blast the ship into sections and drag the fragments out to sea.

The gash in the ship's side is an enormous V-shaped hole, with the plates rolled and bent inward by the terrific impact of the Bourgogne's prow.

I was the first man to go over the Ailsa preparatory to blowing the vessel up. It was about two weeks ago. Diving armor is very heavy, and one feels almost ready to smother on a hot day above the water. I had to feel rather queer when I slipped over the side of a boat and felt myself going down into the cool, green seas. I shall find time to look at it from a poetical standpoint.

It has become a chestnut, however, and at present it is a mere matter of business with me. But I will endeavor to give an account of the most exciting dive I have taken since work on the Ailsa began.

It was the first one. Of course, the fish and other strange creatures had not yet been frightened away by the dynamite explosions.

It was about 10 o'clock in the morning when I went over the side of the wrecking schooner and took a forty-foot drop through the cool brine to the bottom.

My electric light was burning brightly and the surface of the ocean lay above me like a green floor. I could see the bottom of the schooner—a dark blue on its surface. There was absolutely no sound except that of my own breathing and the crackle of my armor.

In my drop to the bottom I could see shoals of fish scurrying through the water like birds on the wing. They would wheel around my light and, noiseless, fading away into the dim, blank wall of green water or approaching until their curious goggle eyes were gazing directly into mine. There is nothing more amusingly curious than a lively, healthy fish when you study him from a diving armor.

I started to explore along the dark sides of the big caissons, when I aroused one of those big-mouthed and ugly fish that always lie flat on the bottom, with waving whiskers and open mouth, waiting for something to swim into reach. This one waggled slowly away, as though disgusted.

I counted the caissons and the chains, while the schools of fish whisked past me in a continual procession. Of course, I expected to see a shark. I have seen hundreds of them, but never yet has one offered to attack me. There is absolutely no danger in them for a diver.

I went aft along the deck, clambering outside the rigging to keep my lines clear. On the after deck the doors were open leading down the companionway. Experience has made me very cautious about entering a water-filled saloon without knowing beforehand just what it contains.

I picked up an iron bolt and began to hammer it, slowly and heavily, against the sides of the stairway, keeping my body well to one side.

The result was startling. Out came flock after flock of frightened fish. Away they sailed, out through the rigging and into open water, scared out of their senses. The interior seemed to be filled with them. From the open forehatch I saw a shark, long and sharp nosed, come sailing out and over the side.

When I thought the coast was clear I went down into the ship's interior. It had been almost completely dismantled. Everything of value had been taken away by the man who had paid $100 for the ship.

I sat down on the floor of the dining saloon and ruminated. It was strange, when I thought of my position. Forty-five feet under the sea, sitting in a dining-room filled with water. I was monarch of all I surveyed, although there was not much to survey.

If I could only have smoked a cigar or talked to some one! My light turned the gloom into a sort of sickly greenish yellow. I was the only guest at that banquet table. No, not quite.

In through the door came a school of fish, alert, round-eyed and curious. They saw me sitting there, and evidently thought I was a funny sight. I liked to have them around when not working.

The moment I got up, however, away they went helter-skelter.

I thoroughly overhauled the ship, and found out just what was needed. Then I gave the signal, and was drawn to the surface. I had been down over two hours.

The sun and the blue sky are always twice as beautiful after a dive of this kind.

"Have you heard the firing?" somebody asked.

"What firing?"

"Why the guns at Fort Hamilton have been booming steadily since you went down. They have been at artillery practice."

I had heard nothing at all. This seems to be remarkable, in view of the fact that it is customary to fire cannon to raise dead bodies to the surface of the water.

I cannot tell how long it will take to raise the sunken ship. It depends altogether upon the success of each dynamite cartridge. I think, however, that another month will pretty well clear things up.

HARRY DWYER, Diver.

Spends $2,000,000 a Year for the ...

SULTAN ABDUL HASMID'S table expenses are $5,000 a day. For the 365 days last year he spent $1,962,000.

No other human being of modern times is accredited with spending one-fifth this enormous amount. It does not include grand State dinners or other elaborate functions. It is simply for His Majesty's regular every-day meals.

Queen Victoria, Emperor William of Germany, the Czar of Russia, Li Hung Chang—not one of them spends anything like this amount. They are all most extravagant diners, and the most expensive of the world's delicacies are piled upon their tables, but even by importing the costliest viands from all parts of the world, their table expenses are nowhere near the Sultan's.

The much talked of luxury of our own millionaires, such as the Vanderbilts, the Astors, and so forth, sinks into insignificance beside the expenditure of the Sultan.

A strange feature of the Sultan's dining is that no one enjoys the food with him. He eats alone. Never, upon any pretext whatever, does he have a companion at his meals. He does not even have a dining room, or a dining hall, but takes his dinner wherever he may happen to be. The menials, at the dinner hour, search out His Majesty, and then in a long procession, bring the banquet to him, table, trays, dishes and all.

He may be in the palace, or in the garden, or any part of his great private park. It makes no difference, he takes his meal right on the spot. All the morning, the large corps of imperil cooks prepare the dinner. As the noon hour arrives, slaves are sent in various diections to discover the whereabouts of His Majesty. Having done this, they report his exact location to the Sultan's chief chamberlain, who then calculates the time required to transport the numerous dishes to him without their getting cooled.

The chamberlain then stands beside the chief server and supervises the transferring of the different kinds of food from the kettles into the silver tureens. These vessels are very elaborate. They consist of many shapes, sizes and designs, and are beautifully chased and engraved. They are so constructed that they can be entirely sealed up, leaving no chance for any one to drop anything into the food.

As fast as each vessel is filled, the chamberlain seals it and puts on it his official stamp. This is a guarantee of its inspection, and that it contains no poisonous substances. Over each tureen a bell-shaped felt cover is clapped down tightly to retain the warmth. Over these felt covers magnificent velvet covers, embroidered with gold and silver threads and pearl, coral or turquoise beads, are spread.

The dinner procession, consisting of over a hundred persons, is then formed. First come ten slaves, bearing the great table. It is of silver, and perhaps the most exquisite table that has ever been made. The legs and sides are richly chased, and the top is so highly polished that it looks like a mirror. Then come a long line of jubilakiars, or "first assistants of the chief cook," each bearing on his head a tray, upon which rests one of the silver vessels. These jubilakiars are so perfectly trained in the art of head balancing that no accident—not even the jarring of a dish—has ever been known. Following come more slaves, bearing on their heads another course, and after them come still other detachments with other courses. In the rear follow the slaves who are to wait on His Majesty.

The procession moves up to where the Sultan is standing. Two slaves run forward with a silken rug, which is spread upon the floor or ground as the case may be. On this a divan is placed, and the Sultan reclines. The table is placed in front of him and the tureens are brought up. As each is set down the Chamberlain steps forward and breaks the seal. On each side of him stands an imperial taster. The Chamberlain hands a ladleful from each vessel first to one taster and then to the other. After it has been swallowed the Chamberlain then takes a spoonful himself. The Sultan meanwhile watching the operation. Everything being satisfactory, the kettles, one after the other, are arranged before His Majesty, who runs his eye over the many viands. Then he picks and chooses, eating a piece here and a piece there, a mouthful of meat, a spoonful of water ice, a sweet cake and a tiny fish ball. The Sultan never uses a plate. He takes all his food directly from the little silver kettles that are arranged in a circle around him, rarely ever using a knife or fork. A spoon, his bread and his fingers, which are constantly wiped by an attendant, handler and ... He is assi... and gegelik, and he gene... dinner time ... over the ... grounds.

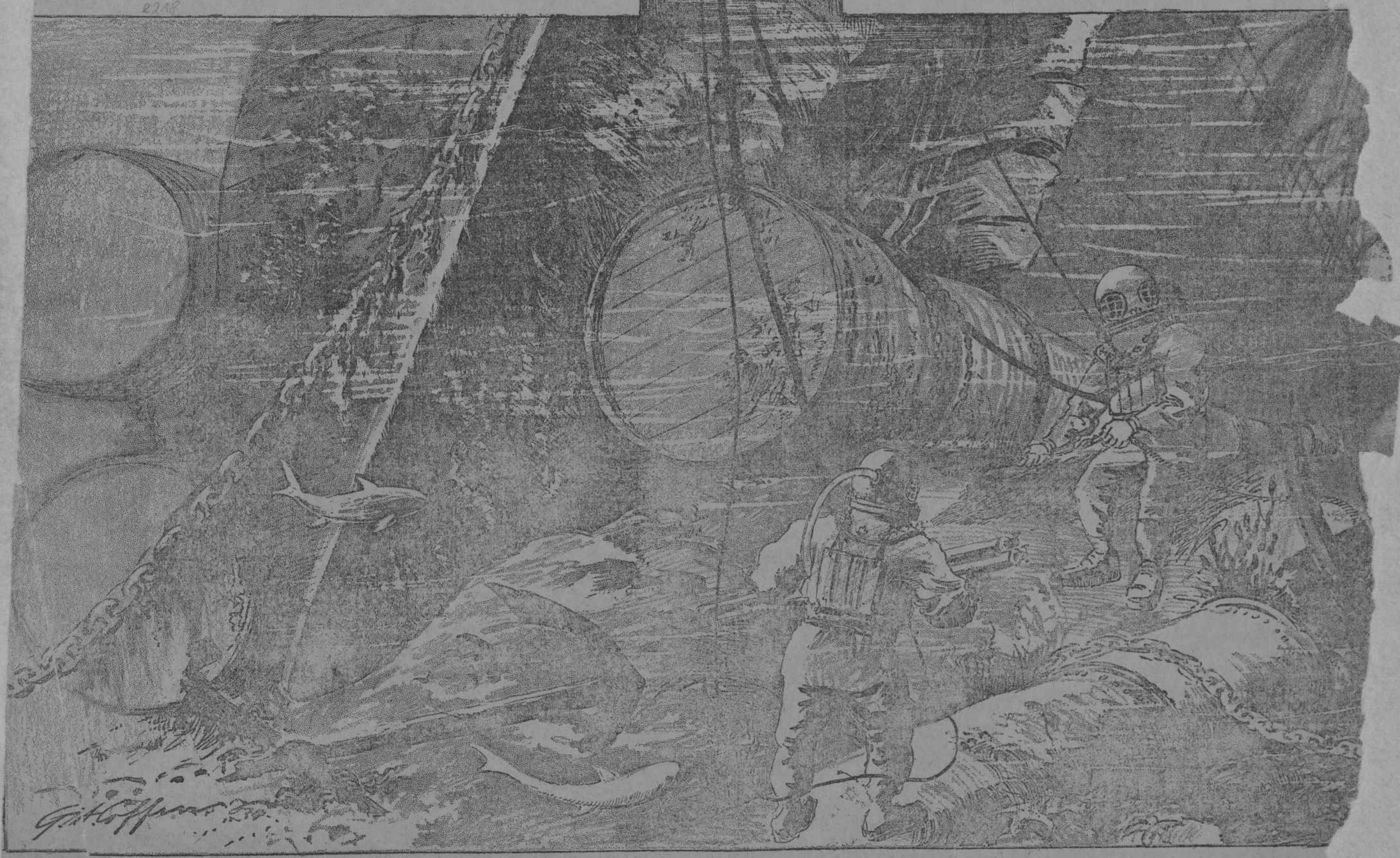
After he ... tan sips his ... lying back ... taking his ease.

The Sultan ... erty to take ... them be ... wherever ... tan has a ... chamberla ... are fed. ... high degr... servants ... thei... time all t... men ... stables have theirs, and ... of the meals any stranger, w... be, is at liberty to come in and seat ... and eat. It is a sort of perpetual ... lunch, and one that is enjoyed ever... in the year at the Sultan's expense.

HIDDEN TREASURE

Frenchmen Split Open Five-Franc ... to Find 100,000 Francs.

It is asserted by the Industr... a reputable German paper, that ... of five-franc pieces are split into ... by their French owners every ... hope of "discovering" an imm... treasure. This treasure, acco... legend firmly believed in F... order to pay the holder 100,... silver five-franc coins. W... Bonaparte first set the five-... circulation the conservativ... French revolted against ... revolution, notwithstanding its ... litical revolution, and it was ... to induce a Frenchman to recei... a new coin ... ...nee, according to the ... ga... der... upon ... of th... to this ... piece.



The Journal Sketches the Wrecked Ailsa "Full Fathom Five" Under the Surface of ...